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Cal Poly Engineering Professor Receives Service Learning Fellowship

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Lynne Slivovsky, a Hood endowed professor that teaches in computer and electrical engineering, was recently selected as a Faculty Fellow in the Service Learning for Political Engagement Program, a joint venture between the California Campus Compact and Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Slivovsky, one of just 25 faculty members from public and private universities across California to be honored with the fellowship, proposed a new multi-disciplinary service learning course in museum design. “Students will create museum exhibits for the local community that highlight sustainability in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education,” she said.

Beginning fall quarter 2007, the new University Studies course will be open to all interested Cal Poly seniors. Slivovsky and three colleagues of varied expertise will share the teaching duties: Kathy Chen, materials engineering; Robert Arens, architecture; and Shirley Magnusson, education.

Slivovsky and her colleagues plan to work with several museums throughout San Luis Obispo County, providing an opportunity for students to collaborate with peers from other disciplines in meaningful service to the community. “The idea is to design exhibits that are attractive to children and will engage their parents as well,” she said.

Students will also interact with local elementary and high school teachers to assess their needs and develop educational materials for use in the classroom. To be most beneficial, the materials must be designed to comply with California educational standards, engaging students in the political process.

Slivovsky and other Faculty Fellows will convene for the first time this summer for a three-day institute at the Carnegie Foundation to discuss each of their new courses. “This work is important and complex, which is why we are bringing together the most thoughtful and committed faculty to develop models of service learning,” said Elaine Ikeda, executive director of California Campus Compact.

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